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ABSTRACT

The following topics of the annual report of the evaluation and assessment unit of the New Mexico State Department of Education are discussed: (1) standardized/norm-referenced testing program, (2) objective-based testing program, (3) assistance to the mutual action plan, (4) technical assistance and consultative services to SDE staff and operational units, (5) State evaluation advisory committee, (6) opinion survey, (7) budget, (8) information dissemination, (9) future planning, and (10) projected activities. (CK)

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1972-73 ANNUAL REPORT

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT UNIT

TM 003 026

NEW MEXICO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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The major purposes of the Evaluation Unit efforts in 1972-73 were to continue field testing procedures and measures for the implementation of objective-based evaluation at grades 6 and 9; to field test measures in the area of career education including vocational skills measures at grade 12; to continue coordination of ongoing testing programs at grades 1, 5, 8, and 12, and to improve the data utilization capabilities of educators at various levels as well as the general public.

ANNUAL REPORT: 1972-73 FISCAL YEAR - EVALUATION UNIT
INSTRUCTIONAL SERVICES DIVISION
NEW MEXICO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

I. INTRODUCTION:

The passage of Senate Bill 1 of the New Mexico Legislature 1969 provided a mandate for and gave impetus to the evaluation and assessment programs of the New Mexico public schools.

The statute specified that the New Mexico State Board of Education would evaluate one-third (1/3) of the school districts in the State each year. Specific reference is contained in 77-2-2 of the New Mexico School Code - State Board duties.

> W. assess and evaluate for accreditation purposes at least one-third (1/3) of all public schools each year through visits by department personnel to investigate the adequacy of pupil activities, functional feasibility of public school and school district organization, adequacy of staff preparation and other matters bearing upon the education of qualified students;

The responsibility of implementing the provisions of Senate Bill 1 was originally placed with the research, development, and planning division of the State Department of Education. Subsequent changes in the Department's organization and priorities have now placed this responsibility with the Evaluation and Assessment Unit of the Instructional Services Division of the Department.

Both the philosophy and the processes for evaluating schools have evolved from one of quantitative analysis of school facilities, equipment, staff, general program and curriculum offerings, to one

which also includes objective-based product evaluation of student progress. This evolution has taken place in order to move toward the qualitative analysis of school programs and their effects on students. A process has been developed which provides for the periodic selection of cognitive skill objectives by committees composed of school staff members, teachers, parents, students, and local citizens. Committees in every school system of the state have now been involved in establishing priorities on a comparative value scale relating to each objective. Instruments or tests to measure progress in meeting these priority basic skill objectives have been developed. These are being field tested and analyzed.

The Evaluation and Assessment Unit has coordinated these efforts with local school systems, community leaders, State Department of Education staff specialists and outside consultants.

The Evaluation and Assessment Unit has also assumed responsibility for the statewide testing program which utilizes standardized tests. The Unit has been involved both directly and in a supportive role with the Mutual Action Plan (MAP) and has provided assistance to the statewide school accreditation effort. Responsibility for coordinating Senate Memorial 40 (Local Citizens Advisory and Evaluation Committees) has recently been assumed by the Unit. A continuing activity of the Unit provides technical assistance for developing evaluation models and procedures for other units and divisions within the Department. In addition, the Evaluation and Assessment Unit

supports the activities, efforts and objectives of the Instructional Services Division of the Department of Education as well as the overall goals and objectives of the Department and the State Board of Education.

II. STANDARDIZED/NORM-REFERENCED TESTING PROGRAM

During October 1972, standardized tests were administered in each of the 88 school districts.

The Otis Lennon Mental Ability Test (OLMAT) was administered to all first grade students. The Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), and the Short Form Test of Academic Aptitude (SFTAA) were administered to all fifth and all eighth grade students. Additionally the American College Test (ACT) was administered to most college bound high school seniors and a few high school 11th graders.

A. The Otis Lennon Mental Ability Test - Grade 1

The instructions for this test, a pictorial aptitude measure, are read to the student by the teacher or other test administrator. The instrument is designed to measure the aptitude of children entering the first grade to perform the tasks expected of a student beginning school.

A Spanish translation of the instructions for this test was prepared and used in a few pilot schools. The responses concerning the utility of reading the

test instructions in Spanish were mixed. Additional study is indicated to determine the validity of this process. The Otis Lennon Test was administered to 21,244 first grade students.

B. Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills and the Short Form Test of Academic Aptitude - Grade 5

These tests are administered together to show anticipated achievement as well as the obtained score. The California Test of Basic Skills measures student levels of achievement in reading, language, mathematics, and study skills. The Short Form Test of Academic Aptitude is designed to give verbal, non-verbal and total aptitude scores. Appropriate levels of the above tests were administered to 23,960 fifth grade students in October of 1972.

C. Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills and the Short Form Test of Academic Aptitude-Grade 8

These tests are similar to the tests administered at grade five but at a higher level appropriate to the grade. The tests were administered to 23,550 eighth grade students during the month of October 1972.

Specific in-depth information concerning the results of the standardized testing program is contained in the following three documents:

1. New Mexico Statewide Testing Program 1972-73
2. Analysis of the Statewide Testing Program Results - 1972-73
3. New Mexico School District Profile 1973

These documents were prepared by the Evaluation and Assessment Unit personnel. Copies have been distributed to [illegible] school superintendents and to the appropriate public officials. Copies for review and analysis are available at the New Mexico State Department of Education.

The procedure for administering the standardized tests consisted of assigning a test coordinator for each school district so that test related communications could be channeled to and from the State Department of Education. Every effort was made to initiate two way communication between State Department staff and local school authorities concerning the testing procedures.

A. Pre-test workshops were held in each district in September, an improvement over the previous year when test coordinators and administrators were required to attend regional workshops. Another innovation was the videotape training packet which was used successfully in several districts.

Teachers of the students tested administered the measures using specific instructions provided them in the Manual for Administration. The completed tests were then sent to the State Department

of Education for preliminary checking and then to the test company for scoring and for performing the designated statistical analyses. Statistical treatment for the tests consisted of processing answer sheets which were coded for each student to indicate the name, date of birth, sex, ethnic background, school district, size of district, and name of teacher. Score printouts were obtained for the school, the district and the State Department of Education.

B. Five regional post-test workshops, attended by nearly 300 educators, were conducted by consultants from the test companies the first week in December. Benefiting from our first year of experience with this technique, the presentations were made more relevant to the needs of the local education agencies in the area of interpretation and use of test results. Many favorable comments resulted and requests for even more such assistance in the future have been received.

Information derived from this program has been useful not only in helping LEAs improve services to their students but in interpreting educational programs and needs to parents, the community, board members, and legislators.

III. OBJECTIVE-BASED TESTING PROGRAM

The objective-based testing program is a cooperative effort between the New Mexico State Department of Education and the local

school districts of New Mexico to develop a process and design instruments for measuring the progress of students in behavioral terms and to aid in determining the quality of the product of New Mexico education.

Objective-based tests have been developed as instruments for measuring student knowledge, skills, and abilities. These instruments were developed by State Department of Education staff and outside consultant specialists in the construction of objective-based tests. An extensive "bank" or list of cognitive basic skill objectives prepared and submitted by local school district committees was used as the base from which the current objective bank has evolved. This bank of basic skill objectives includes goal statements in five areas, including communication skills, science, social studies, math, and the new area added this year, career education. From these objectives, local committees select priority objectives for their students as outlined at the beginning of this document. Measures are constructed based upon objectives selected by New Mexico districts. For further information on this process, note the Evaluation and Assessment Unit publication, "A Manual to Aid the Understanding and Implementation of Statewide Evaluation."

Eighteen instruments were field tested during fiscal year 1971-72, and revisions were made on the basis of the field test findings. Revised versions of the tests, which more accurately reflected the needs and expectations of local school districts, were

administered to all graduating seniors during the spring of 1973.

A stratified sample of sixth and ninth grade students was also included in the objective-based testing program in 1972-73. The purpose of the 6th and 9th grade sample was to provide for progress analysis at critical checkpoints, to assist local school districts in the determination of program strengths and weaknesses, and to primarily field test the measures and procedures.

An additional component of the objective-based testing program for this fiscal year consisted of the development of instruments to assess students' awareness of various aspects of career education. Tests were also developed and administered in several selected vocational skill areas, including Vocational Agriculture, Distributive Education, Office Education, Auto Mechanics, and Home Economics. The vocational skill tests were administered to students completing a vocationally approved program. Both the career education measures (grades 6, 9, and 12), and the vocational skills measures were administered on a sample field test basis to assist in refining the measures and the procedures.

Objective-based tests were administered to approximately 18,500 high school seniors, approximately 5,000 9th grade students, and approximately 3,200 6th grade students.

The process involved in carrying out the objective-based testing program consisted of preparing the test items for each of the forty tests that were to be given. These tests were printed

in the Department of Education Printshop. A computer printout was prepared to provide the specifics of the test assignments by school, number of tests to be given, and the appropriate numbers of testing groups within each school district. The printouts and labels for each packet of tests and test materials were supplied to the Evaluation and Assessment Unit and used as a basis for packaging materials for each of the almost 1,000 classrooms tested.

The test materials were packaged at the Department of Education to be taken to the schools by the State Department of Education objective-based test coordinators. Thirty-three SDE professional staff members served as test coordinators for the program. Each SDE test coordinator and each local test administrator was provided with "A Manual for Teachers to Aid the Understanding and Implementation of Statewide Testing." This fourteen-page booklet contained explicit instructions for administering the objective-based tests. Test coordinators were provided with training sessions for carrying out this special assignment. The role of the SDE coordinator was to contact the local school superintendent who had already received information about the program following a statewide meeting for superintendents and local test coordinators. The local superintendent also received a printout showing the number of students per test group, grade levels, and tests to be given. SDE coordinators then delivered the testing materials to the local test coordinator, met with the teachers or staff members who were to administer the tests, and discussed the testing procedures. The SDE coordinators were at the school system

while the tests were administered in order to assist with problems as they occurred and to prepare the tests and answer sheets for immediate return to the State Department of Education. As the answer sheets were returned to Santa Fe, they were checked, labeled, and dispatched to the State Data Processing Center for processing.

The objective-based testing program involved all public school systems in the state. The tests were administered over a two week period during the month of March 1973. Three to five tests were administered to each student involved in the sampling. Approximate testing time for each student was two hours. For those students who took the vocational skills test, a slightly longer period of time was required.

The answer sheets for the objective-based testing program were designed by the Evaluation Unit so that they could be scored here in New Mexico by the State Data Processing Center. This results in a significant reduction in turn around time, or the time between when the answer sheets are received at the Department and the time when the printouts of results are received by the LEAs. Tapes of the results were sent to Educational Evaluation Associates for extensive analyses. These analyses will be studied by the Evaluation Unit Staff, SDE specialists, and local school authorities to determine the validity, utility and relevancy of the tests for measuring the product of New Mexico education and for the purpose of correcting deficiencies that are found in the measures. The results will be

made available to local school districts to assist them in the assessment of their educational programs, and to help provide the schools with additional information for curriculum design and selection of program materials. The Instructional Division will utilize the data available for consideration through the Mutual Action Plan.

The Evaluation Unit and additional staff personnel are available to assist local schools in the interpretation and use of the test results. The Unit staff has also worked with districts at other critical points in the objective-based program. A superintendents' workshop was held in September, prior to the objective ranking process. Specific information concerning the selection of priority objectives by the districts' objective ranking committees was provided. A superintendents' meeting was also held in early March of this year prior to the administration of the objective-based tests. Specific administration procedures were discussed, along with general dialogue concerning the evaluation program as a whole.

Information concerning the results of the objective-based testing program for the school year 1972-73 will be made available to legislative committees, State Department of Education staff, the State Board of Education, local school staffs and to the public in forms appropriate to the needs and interests of each group. Field test data derived from the 1972-73 objective-based tests will be utilized in the revision of the measures and procedures, and will not be available for actual program assessment.

IV. ASSISTANCE TO THE MUTUAL ACTION PLAN

Staff members of the Evaluation and Assessment Unit also

served as representatives to ten local school districts. The MAP effort involved a one week staff orientation session, many visitations to local school districts, analysis of accreditation reports, in-office visits with local school staffs, and other Department-LEA phone and postal communications.

In addition to the MAP assignments, the Evaluation and Assessment staff conducted meetings and workshops for all MAP personnel on the interpretation and utilization of test results.

V. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND CONSULTATIVE SERVICES TO SDE STAFF AND OPERATIONAL UNITS:

The staff of the Evaluation and Assessment Unit provided technical assistance to the Title I, ESEA program, the Title III, ESEA program, Vocational Education and Early Childhood Education. The assistance consisted of consultation and recommendations and design development for evaluation models to meet the specific needs of these particular programs.

VI. STATE EVALUATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Evaluation and Assessment Unit has coordinated the activities of the State Evaluation Advisory Committee on testing and evaluation. The Committee, consisting of twenty members, has met eight times during the fiscal year and has provided a valuable linkage between the State Board of Education and local school authorities. Suggestions and recommendations of the Statewide Advisory Committee have been incorporated into the Evaluation Unit's activities whenever possible and when deemed in the best interest of state goals and needs.

VII. SENATE MEMORIAL 40 - CITIZENS COMMITTEES FOR EVALUATION OF SCHOOLS

The Evaluation and Assessment Unit assumed responsibility for Senate Memorial 40 activities during this fiscal year. Senate Memorial 40 charges the State Board of Education with the responsibility of establishing Citizens School Advisory Committees in all school systems that do not have evaluation procedures. The program has been operative for two years. During fiscal year 1972-73, Advisory Committees hav formed in ten new school districts. These include Roswell, Carrizozo, Chama, Dexter, Jal, Melrose, Pecos, Pojoaque, Truth or Consequences and Lordsburg. Plans are now being developed to form committees in ten additional school systems during the 1973-74 fiscal year. The Local Citizens Advisory Committees submit a report of their findings and recommendations to the Governor, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and to the Legislative School Study Committee for analysis and subsequent action.

VIII. SURVEY OF OPINIONS AND REACTIONS TO PROPOSED PLAN FOR STATEWIDE EVALUATION

During this fiscal year, a proposed plan for statewide evaluation was prepared and submitted to local school authorities and selected SDE staff members for their opinions, reactions and recommendations. An accompanying questionnaire seeking reaction to specific elements of the plan elicited responses from 90 educators. Reactions were varied and provided valuable information for continuous study and analysis of the program.

The results of this survey are being used along with other

factors as a basis for modification of the plan and for the development of future activities that show promise of improving education through the assessment of education in New Mexico.

IX. ZERO BASE BUDGET

All objectives of the Evaluation and Assessment Unit's program were in direct concurrence and support of the overall goals and objectives of the State Department of Education and the State Board of Education. The objectives and performance indicators as established in the Zero Base Budget were accomplished as well as additional tasks not predicted at the initial time of budget preparation. Some of these included preparation of materials for Department staff members on accountability, testing, and evaluation. The staff also prepared reports for legislators, made public appearances, cooperated with agencies interested in educational improvement, acted as liaison with the State Library and other resource facilities, responded to nationwide inquiries relating to New Mexico's evaluation and assessment efforts, and provided technical assistance to non-public schools on school evaluation procedures.

X. PUBLICATIONS AND DISSEMINATION

The Evaluation and Assessment Unit prepared and disseminated the following documents during the fiscal year: Statewide Testing Program 1972-73, Analysis of Statewide Testing Program Results 1972-73, New Mexico School District Profile 1973, Manual for Teachers to Aid the Understanding and Implementation of Statewide Evaluation, New Mexico's Statewide Evaluation System - An Introduction 1972-73, Manual for MAP

Representatives to Aid the Understanding of Statewide Evaluation, Proposed Plan for Statewide Evaluation, A Look at the State: Results of Objective-Based Testing.

XI. REPORTS TO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Two progress reports were prepared and presented to the State Board of Education to provide information enabling the Board to make decisions, policies and regulations concerning the statewide evaluation and assessment programs.

XII. FACTORS IN FUTURE PLANNING

A variety of factors will influence the future plans and projections for the evaluation programs of the state. These factors include, but are not limited to, State Board of Education policies and regulations, budgetary limitations, input from the Statewide Evaluation Advisory Committee, results of analyses of previous activities, input from local school superintendents, legislative considerations, considerations for the changing needs and expectations of students, teachers and the community, and developments, knowledge and understanding in the field of tests, measurement, assessment, and educational accountability.

XIII. PROJECTED ACTIVITIES FOR 1973-74

The projected activities for 1973-74 under consideration at this time are as follows:

- .Standardized testing at grades 1, 5 and 8
- .Objective-based group assessment measures at grades 6, 9, and 12
- .Increased communication and participation with LEAs regarding Statewide Evaluation
- .Consideration and position on affective domain measurement

- Increased data availability for accreditation and program improvement purposes
- Publishing useful documents within the area of evaluation, i.e., the Profile, Summaries of Test Results, guidelines for Better Utilization of Test Results, etc.
- Providing data base and interim evaluation assistance for the Mutual Action Plan
- Providing a statewide evaluation design for early childhood education programs